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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/725,765	11/30/2000	Toshiaki Okabe	108001	1657
25944	7590	08/20/2004	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			SINGH, RACHNA	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2176	
DATE MAILED: 08/20/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary**Application No.**

09/725,765

Applicant(s)

OKABE ET AL.

Examiner

Rachna Singh

Art Unit

2176

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 April 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: Application filed 11/30/00
2. Claims 1-14 are pending. Claims 1, 8, 9, 13, and 14 are independent claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Egendorf et al., US 2003/0177111 A1, 9/18/03 (filed 1/21/03 (continuation of app filed 11/16/99)).

In reference to claims 1, 8, and 13, Egendorf teaches a method for searching from a plurality of data sources. Egendorf's system comprises the following:

-A method for searching for information in a plurality of information sources connected to a network and specifically to searching databases on the Internet. See page 1, paragraph [0001]. Compare to ***"a document integrated management apparatus. .***

.plural documents stored in plural databases. . .comprising:"

-A set of mechanisms that stores information that relates terms to searchbase categories. These linkages and rules, related sets of searchbase nodes, thereby creating a concept dictionary. A searchbase contains relationships between categories and information sources. See page 5, paragraph [0059]. Thus the mechanism manages linkage information among documents in plural databases. See page 6,

paragraph [0075]. Compare to ***“a linkage information management unit that stores and manages linkage information . . .one or more documents as documents related to each other”***.

-A mechanism for creating and storing information about the relationships between different categories and information sources. See page 6, paragraphs [0075]. These linkages and rules, related sets of searchbase nodes, thereby creating a concept dictionary. A searchbase contains relationships between categories and information sources. See page 5, paragraph [0059]. Compare to ***“a document information management unit. . .one or more documents as documents related to each other, the documents being stored in the plural databases”***.

-Providing a plurality of packets wherein each packet is associated with one of a plurality of information sources and includes an identification of the information source and content description. See page 20, claim 11, page 5, paragraph [0059], pages 5-6, paragraph [0067] and figure 2B. Compare to ***“identifiers of document sets, wherein the linkage information and the document information are linked to each other by identifiers of the document sets.”*** Egendorf teaches the concept of a searchbase that contains relationships between categories and information sources and the associated descriptive packets. The descriptive packets describe an information source that purports to contain information relevant to the category of that node. The descriptive packets include an identification of the information source and content information. See page 5, paragraph [0059] and pages 5-6, paragraph [0067]. Furthermore, the searchbase can comprise a plurality of descriptive packets, wherein each packet is

associated with one of a plurality of information sources. Thus the linkage information and document information are linked to each other using identifiers. The claimed “identifier of the document sets” are taught by Egendorf by his searchbase comprising packets that identify linkage information and document information in that the packets contain information sources that have information relevant to the category of the node. Thus the “packets” serve the same purpose of the claimed invention’s identifiers in that the packets do serve as an identifier of information sources related to a given document set or “searchbase”.

Egendorf teaches searching documents from a plurality of information sources. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to search from a plurality of databases, as a database is an information source.

In reference to claim 2, Egendorf discloses a method for searching for information from a plurality of data sources. Egendorf’s system teaches receiving a search request from a user to retrieve information from a plurality of information sources in accordance with the given search criteria. Egendorf further teaches searching the searchbase with the inquiry to identify any of the plurality of information sources that meet the criteria. See page 20, first column.

In reference to claims 3 and 4, Egendorf discloses a set of mechanisms that store information that relates terms to searchbase categories. These linkages and rules, related sets of searchbase nodes, thereby creating a concept dictionary. A searchbase contains relationships between categories and information sources. See page 5, paragraph [0059]. Thus the mechanism manages linkage information among

documents in plural databases. See page 6, paragraph [0075]. Egendorf further teaches providing a plurality of packets wherein each packet is associated with one of a plurality of information sources and includes an identification of the information source and content description. See page 20, claim 11. It is inherent in Egendorf's system that the process of identifying an information source using identification is used as a means to target a database from the plurality of databases. Moreover, the identifier is used to identify the database and provide information from the source.

In reference to claim 5, Egendorf teaches a hierarchical network in which each category element of the network facilitates associations with the element to information source associations. Specifically, Egendorf discloses that the network includes cross-reference and link elements. See page 5, paragraphs [0060]-[0066]. Thus in presenting a hierarchical representation between the linkages, Egendorf teaches a system in which the target document in a search may be a leaf document or an entire set. See page 5, paragraphs [0060]-[0066].

In reference to claim 6, Egendorf teaches using a history database in which the terms are looked up to see it's usage in the past. See page 4, paragraph [0038].

In reference to claim 7, Egendorf teaches that the search request is transformed into queries for the identified information sources, wherein each query is in accordance with the query language and template in the for the information source. See page 8, paragraph [0101].

In reference to claim 9 and 14, Egendorf teaches a method for searching from a plurality of data sources. Egendorf's system comprises the following:

-A method for searching for information in a plurality of information sources connected to a network and specifically to searching databases on the Internet. See page 1, paragraph [0001]. A set of mechanisms that stores information that relates terms to searchbase categories. These linkages and rules, related sets of searchbase nodes, thereby creating a concept dictionary. A searchbase contains relationships between categories and information sources. See page 5, paragraph [0059]. Thus the mechanism manages linkage information among documents in plural databases. See page 6, paragraph [0075]. Providing a plurality of packets wherein each packet is associated with one of a plurality of information sources and includes an identification of the information source and content description. See page 20, claim 11 Compare to ***"selecting a document set identifier by searching for document information on document sets having one or more documents as related documents, the documents being stored in the plural databases, based on designation of document or document set or search data inputted in a common format from a client system;"***

-A mechanism for creating and storing information about the relationships between different categories and information sources. See page 6, paragraphs [0075]. These linkages and rules, related sets of searchbase nodes, thereby creating a concept dictionary. A searchbase contains relationships between categories and information sources. See page 5, paragraph [0059].

Egendorf discloses a method for searching for information from a plurality of data sources. Egendorf's system teaches receiving a search request from a user to retrieve

information from a plurality of information sources in accordance with the given search criteria. Egendorf further teaches searching the searchbase with the inquiry to identify any of the plurality of information sources that meet the criteria. See page 20, first column. Compare to ***“selecting an access target database. . .based on the selected document set identifier”***. Egendorf teaches the concept of a searchbase that contains relationships between categories and information sources and the associated descriptive packets. The descriptive packets describe an information source that purports to contain information relevant to the category of that node. The descriptive packets include an identification of the information source and content information. See page 5, paragraph [0059] and pages 5-6, paragraph [0067]. Furthermore, the searchbase can comprise a plurality of descriptive packets, wherein each packet is associated with one of a plurality of information sources. Thus the linkage information and document information are linked to each other using identifiers. The claimed “identifier of the document sets” are taught by Egendorf by his searchbase comprising packets that identify linkage information and document information in that the packets contain information sources that have information relevant to the category of the node. Thus the “packets” serve the same purpose of the claimed invention’s identifiers in that the packets do serve as an identifier of information sources related to a given document set or “searchbase”.

Egendorf teaches searching documents from a plurality of information sources. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to search from a plurality of databases, as a database is an information source.

In reference to claim 10, Egendorf discloses a set of mechanisms that store information that relates terms to searchbase categories. These linkages and rules, related sets of searchbase nodes, thereby creating a concept dictionary. A searchbase contains relationships between categories and information sources. See page 5, paragraph [0059]. Thus the mechanism manages linkage information among documents in plural databases. See page 6, paragraph [0075]. Egendorf further teaches providing a plurality of packets wherein each packet is associated with one of a plurality of information sources and includes an identification of the information source and content description. See page 20, claim 11. It is inherent in Egendorf's system that the process of identifying an information source using identification is used as a means to target a database from the plurality of databases. Moreover, the identifier is used to identify the database and provide information from the source.

In reference to claim 11, Egendorf teaches a hierarchical network in which each category element of the network facilitates associations with the element to information source associations. Specifically, Egendorf discloses that the network includes cross-reference and link elements. See column 5, paragraphs [0060]-[0066]. Thus in presenting a hierarchical representation between the linkages, Egendorf teaches a system in which the target document in a search may be a leaf document or an entire set. See column 5, paragraphs [0060]-[0066].

In reference to claim 12, Egendorf teaches that the search request is transformed into queries for the identified information sources, wherein each query is in accordance

with the query language and template in the for the information source. See page 8, paragraph [0101].

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 4/30/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that Egendorf does not disclose identifiers of document sets, wherein the linkage information and the document information are linked to each other by the identifiers of the document sets. Applicant argues that Egendorf teaches identification of the information source and not of the document sets having one or more documents stored in a plurality of databases. Egendorf teaches the concept of a searchbase that contains relationships between categories and information sources and the associated descriptive packets. The descriptive packets describe an information source that purports to contain information relevant to the category of that node. The descriptive packets include an identification of the information source and content information. See page 5, paragraph [0059] and pages 5-6, paragraph [0067].

Furthermore, the searchbase can comprise a plurality of descriptive packets, wherein each packet is associated with one of a plurality of information sources. Thus the linkage information and document information are linked to each other using identifiers. The claimed "identifier of the document sets" are taught by Egendorf by his searchbase comprising packets that identify linkage information and document information in that the packets contain information sources that have information relevant to the category of the node. Thus the "packets" serve the same purpose of the claimed invention's

identifiers in that the packets do serve as an identifier of information sources related to a given document set or “searchbase”.

Applicant further argues that Egendorf does not disclose linkage information and the document information are linked to each other by the identifiers of the document sets. As stated above, Egendorf teaches the use of a plurality of packets that identify information sources relevant to a category of the searchbase. The descriptive packets include an identification of the information source and content information. See page 5, paragraph [0059] and pages 5-6, paragraph [0067]. Furthermore, the searchbase can comprise a plurality of descriptive packets, wherein each packet is associated with one of a plurality of information sources. Thus the linkage information and document information are linked to each other using identifiers. The claimed “identifier of the document sets” are taught by Egendorf by his searchbase comprising packets that identify linkage information and document information in that the packets contain information sources that have information relevant to the category of the node. Thus the “packets” serve the same purpose of the claimed invention’s identifiers in that the packets do serve as an identifier of information sources related to a given document set or “searchbase”.

Furthermore, Applicant argues that ***“For Egendorf to disclose or suggest the above-noted features, Egendorf would have to disclose that the packet links the categories with identifiers identifying information contained in the information source”***. Examiner asserts that Egendorf does teach that the packet links the categories with identifiers identifying information in the information source. Please see

explanation above and page 5, paragraph [0059], pages 5-6, paragraph [0067] and figure 2B.

Applicant argues that Egendorf does not disclose or suggest selecting an access target database by searching linkage information among the documents stored in plural databases **OR** documents sets as one or more documents as related documents, based on the selected document set identifier and that for Egendorf to disclose such a feature, he would have to disclose that the packet links the categories with identifiers identifying information contained in the information source. Please see the explanation above and page 5, paragraph [0059], pages 5-6, paragraph [0067] and figure 2B.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rachna Singh whose telephone number is 703.305.1952. Starting in mid-October, calls to Examiner should be directed to 571-272-4099. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:30-5).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Feild can be reached on 703.305.9792. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

RS
8/16/04


JOSEPH H. FEILD
PRIMARY EXAMINER